

Serve America Act

H.R.1388 [111th]

Serve America Act - Amends the National and Community Service Act of 1990 (NCSA) and the Domestic Volunteer Service Act of 1973 (DVSA) to revise their programs and reauthorize appropriations for them through FY2014.

Title I: Amendments to National and Community Service Act of 1990 - Revises under the NCSA: (1) the School-Based and Community-Based Service-Learning programs and Higher Education Innovative Programs for Community Service, also known as Learn and Serve programs; (2) National Service Trust programs, also known as AmeriCorps; (3) the Civilian Community Corps Demonstration program; and (4) the Investment for Quality and Innovation program.

Subtitle A: Amendments to Subtitle A (General Provisions) - (Sec. 1101) Adds to NCSA purposes: (1) providing year-round opportunities in service-learning; (2) involving program participants in emergency and disaster preparedness, relief, and recovery; (3) increasing service opportunities for retiring professionals; (4) encouraging service by individuals age 55 or older and continued service by national service alumni; (5) focusing national service on the areas of national need such service has the capacity to address; (6) assisting social entrepreneurs and nonprofit community organizations in addressing national and local challenges; (7) leveraging federal investments to increase other public and private resources directed toward such challenges; (8) supporting institutions of higher education (IHEs) that engage students in service-learning; and (9) increasing veterans' participation in national service and assisting the families of veterans and military personnel.

(Sec. 1102) Adds definitions of Alaska Native-serving institutions, approved silver scholar positions, approved summer of service positions, Asian American and Native American Pacific Islander-serving institutions, authorizing committees, community-based entities, disadvantaged youth, Encore Service programs, Hispanic-serving institutions, historically Black colleges or universities, medically underserved populations, Native American-serving, nontribal institutions, Native Hawaiian-serving institutions, predominantly Black Institutions, principles of scientific research, qualified organizations, scientifically valid research, territories, tribally controlled colleges or universities, and veterans.

Subtitle B: Amendments to Subtitle B (Learn and Serve America) - (Sec. 1201) Revises the School-Based programs for elementary and secondary school students (part of the Learn and Serve programs) to eliminate the current competitive grant portion of such programs. Requires the Corporation for National and Community Service (Corporation) to allocate appropriated funds to states, after reserving from 2% to 3% for Indian tribes and territories, pursuant to a formula that takes into account a state's share of school age youth and funds received under title I of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act of 1965 (ESEA). Sets a minimum grant of \$75,000 per state for School-Based programs when fiscal year appropriations for the School-Based programs exceed \$50 million.

Authorizes grants to be used for the development of civic engagement programs dealing with our nation's history and government.

Limits

the Corporation's share of costs for new School-Based programs at 80% for their first year, 65% for their second year, and 50% thereafter. Permits certain schools receiving funds under title I of the ESEA to use such funds to cover their share of program costs.

Increases from 5% to 6% the limit on the use of program funds for administrative costs.

Eliminates the current Community-Based Learn and Serve programs.

(Sec. 1202) Revises the Higher Education Innovative programs (part of the Learn and Serve programs) that award grants to IHEs and partnerships of IHEs and nonprofit organizations for the provision of community service-learning opportunities to postsecondary school students.

Allows

the use of grant funds for the inclusion of service-learning as a key component not only of preservice teacher education, but also of education in other fields, such as medicine, criminal justice, or public policy.

Directs the Corporation, to the extent practicable, to give special consideration to applications submitted by, or partnerships that include, IHEs serving primarily low-income populations, including Alaska Native-serving institutions, Asian American and Native American Pacific Islander-serving institutions, Hispanic-serving institutions, historically Black colleges and universities, Native American-serving, nontribal institutions, Native Hawaiian-serving institutions, predominantly Black institutions, tribally controlled colleges and universities, and community colleges serving predominantly minority populations.

Requires that grantee IHEs meet the minimum requirement set by the Higher Education Act of 1965 regarding the participation of federal work-study students in community service activities.

Establishes a Campuses of Service program under which the Corporation annually designates up to 25 IHEs, from among institutions nominated by state Commissions on National and Community Service (state Commissions), as recipients of funding to develop exemplary service-learning programs or disseminate them to other IHEs.

(Sec. 1203) Establishes a new Learn and Serve program, Innovative Community-Based Service-Learning Programs and Research, providing grants to states, nonprofit organizations, territories, Indian tribes, IHEs, elementary or secondary schools, and local educational agencies (LEAs) to: (1) provide community service-learning opportunities to elementary and secondary, college, and graduate students; and (2) research and evaluate service-learning.

Includes among allowable grant activities: (1) integrating service-learning programs into science, technology, engineering, and mathematics (STEM) curricula; (2) service-learning programs focused on energy conservation, emergency and disaster preparedness, and improving access to computers and other emerging technologies; and (3) involving high school age youth in the mentoring of middle school students.

Authorizes

new Summer of Service programs under which students who will be entering grades 6 through 12 at the end of the summer and complete 100 hours of community-based service learning summer projects become eligible for an educational award of \$500 from funds deposited in the National Service Trust. Permits the Corporation to increase the award to \$750 for economically disadvantaged participants. Allows participants to earn a maximum of two summer of service educational awards.

Authorizes new Youth Engagement Zone programs under which partnerships between community-based agencies and LEAs that serve a high number or percentage of disadvantaged students engage students and out-of-school youth in service-learning addressing specific community challenges.

Authorizes new Semester of Service programs that allow secondary school students, including a large number or percentage of disadvantaged students, to earn academic credit for a semester of coordinated school-based or community-based service-learning that totals at least 70 hours and addresses specific community challenges. Requires participants to spend at least a third of such time participating in field-based activities.

Gives funding priority to programs that: (1) involve students and community stakeholders in their design and implementation; (2) operate in low-income or rural communities; and (3) utilize adult volunteers, including retired or retiring adults.

Directs the Corporation to contract for a 10-year longitudinal study into the effect Learn and Serve programs have on participants' academic performance and commitment to public service. Requires the results of such study to be reported to Congress and made available to the public.

Subtitle C: Amendments to Subtitle C (National Service Trust Program) - (Sec. 1301) Revises the National Service Trust (AmeriCorps) program to: (1) include territories as eligible grant recipients; (2) prohibit the provision of grants to federal agencies; and (3) require grant recipients (other than fixed amount grant recipients) to report any non-Corporation federal funding for their program.

Directs the Corporation to develop and, subject to the availability of appropriations, implement a plan to establish the number of approved national service positions as 88,000 for FY2010, and increase them to 115,000 for FY2011, 140,000 for FY2012, 170,000 for FY2013, 200,000 for FY2014, 210,000 for FY2015, 235,000 for FY2016, and 250,000 for FY2017. Requires such increases to be achieved through an appropriate balance of full- and part-time service positions.

(Sec. 1302) Requires

AmeriCorps grant recipients and federal agencies operating or supporting national service programs to devote a portion of their funding to operating or supporting: (1) an Education Corps to address unmet educational needs; (2) a Healthy Futures Corps to address unmet health needs; (3) a Clean Energy Service Corps to address unmet environmental needs; (4) a Veterans Corps to address the unmet needs of veterans and members of the Armed Forces who are on active duty; or (5) an Opportunity Corps to address the unmet needs of economically disadvantaged individuals.

Sets forth authorized AmeriCorps programs that include those that: (1) meet the development needs of rural communities; (2) engage citizens in public safety, health, and emergency preparedness services; (3) expand the number of mentors for disadvantaged and other youths; (4) provide life skills training, employment training, educational assistance, counseling, or a mentoring relationship with an adult volunteer to individuals who are mostly disadvantaged youth; and (5) reduce recidivism by re-engaging court-involved youth and adults.

Authorizes AmeriCorps grantees

to implement program models that include: (1) community corps programs that promote community unity through the use of organized teams that include participants with diverse backgrounds and abilities; (2) service programs that recruit individuals with special skills or provide participants with specialized preservice training; (3) campus based programs involving postsecondary school students; (4) professional corps programs that recruit professionals for service positions that include salaries that are covered by public or private employers and may exceed the maximum living allowance; (5) programs that give veterans opportunities to participate in service projects; and (6) programs carried out by intermediaries that build the capacity of local nonprofit and faith-based organizations to expand and enhance services.

Requires AmeriCorps programs to meet or exceed specified performance indicators.

Requires

national service programs that provide tutoring to elementary and secondary school students to: (1) certify that tutors have obtained their high school diploma and successfully completed pre- and in-service tutor training; and (2) offer high quality curricula that meet state academic content standards.

Requires national service

programs that promote citizenship and civic engagement to meet guidelines, to be established by the Corporation, that are consistent with the principles on which the U.S. Citizenship and Immigration Services' citizenship programs are based.

(Sec. 1303) Allows the

Corporation to approve programs carried out by territories as national service programs that include education awards.

(Sec. 1305)

Increases the minimum and maximum grant the Corporation may make to states to operate state Commissions. Requires states to match such grants at least dollar-for-dollar, though the Corporation may allow certain alternative matches where a state demonstrates hardship or a new state Commission.

Requires challenge grants for national

service programs to be completely matched by private funds for an initial three-year grant period and matched by private amounts that are twice the grant amount thereafter. Allows the Corporation to permit the use of state or local funds as matching funds if private funds are unavailable.

(Sec. 1306) Requires 62.7% of the AmeriCorps funds

allocated by the Corporation to be for competitive grants to states, national nonprofit organizations, and Indian tribes, 35.3% for state formula grants, at least 1% for Indian tribes, and 1% for territories. Establishes a minimum state formula grant of \$600,000 or 0.5% of the amount allocated for formula grants, whichever is greater.

Directs

the Corporation to make an effort to allocate at least 10% of the competitive grant funds available each fiscal year to Encore Service programs (authorized under section 1805 of this Act).

Allows the

Corporation to provide fixed-amount grants to national service programs. Requires such grants to be significantly less than the reasonable and necessary costs of administering the national service programs receiving them.

(Sec. 1307) Establishes the Educational

Awards Only program, as part of the AmeriCorps program, allowing the Corporation to provide operational support, in the form of fixed-amount grants, to programs that have approved national service positions but do not otherwise receive AmeriCorps funds. Limits operational support to \$800 per program participant, or \$1,000 per participant for programs serving at least 50% disadvantaged youth.

(Sec. 1308) Prohibits

the Corporation from providing more than one national service grant for the same project, unless specifically authorized by law.

(Sec.

1310) Prohibits the use of AmeriCorps positions for specified activities, including: (1) attempting to influence legislation; (2) engaging in protests, partisan political activities, or religious instruction; (3) assisting or deterring union organizing; (4) providing abortion services or referrals; or (5) conducting voter registration drives.

Prohibits the provision of AmeriCorps assistance to any organization that has violated a federal criminal statute.

Prohibits participants in approved national service positions from displacing employed workers or other volunteers.

(Sec.

1311) Requires the Corporation to solicit and consider the views of

state Commissions in making competitive AmeriCorps grants.

(Sec. 1313) Requires the Corporation to place special emphasis on disadvantaged youth when selecting individuals to receive national service leadership training.

(Sec. 1314) Allows individuals performing national service in disaster relief to continue to serve for 90 days after their term of service would otherwise end.

(Sec. 1315) Reduces the national service living allowance by the amount of the federal work study award provided to individuals during their national service.

Subtitle D: Amendments to Subtitle D (National Service Trust and Provision of National Service Educational Awards) - (Sec. 1401) Permits the Corporation to use National Service Trust funds to pay for the new Summer of Service and Silver Scholar educational awards authorized under subtitles B and H of this Act, respectively.

(Sec. 1402) Prohibits individuals from receiving a national service educational award from the Trust if they complete less than 15% of their required term of service.

Limits an individual's receipt of such awards to the aggregate value of two national service educational awards for full time service; but excludes Summer of Service educational awards from such calculation. Gives Summer of Service participants 10 years to use their educational awards for such service.

Gives individuals to whom national service or silver scholar educational awards are transferred 10 years to use such awards (transferors have 7 years to use them).

(Sec. 1403) Requires the Corporation, when making educational awards, to rely on certifications made by the entities that selected and supervised the individuals in the approved national service positions that such individuals have successfully completed their required term of service.

(Sec. 1404) Sets the national service educational awards for full-time AmeriCorps, National Civilian Community Corps (NCCC), and Volunteers in Service to America (VISTA) participants at a level equal to the maximum Pell Grant that students may receive in the aggregate under the Higher Education Act of 1965.

(Sec. 1405) Permits the use of such awards to cover education expenses other than attendance at institutions of higher education, including enrollment in an educational institution or training establishment approved for veterans' education and offering programs of education, apprenticeship, or on-job training.

Allows the application of Summer of Service or Silver Scholar educational awards to the repayment of qualified student loans.

Excludes an individual's veterans' education benefits from the calculation of a maximum national service, Summer of Service, or Silver Scholar educational award.

Allows national service educational awards to be transferred to the children, foster children, or grandchildren of award recipients who were 55 or older when they began their term of service. Requires the Corporation to prevent waste, fraud, or abuse in connection with educational award transfers.

Subtitle E: Amendments to Subtitle E (National Civilian Community Corps) - (Sec. 1502) Renames the Civilian Community Corps Demonstration program as the National Civilian Community Corps (NCCC) program. Permits the

NCCC to operate nonresidential programs.

(Sec. 1503) Makes individuals eligible for participation in the NCCC program, other than the summer program, if they will be at least 18 before the end of the calendar year in which they enroll, but are no more than 24 when they begin participating in the program.

Requires the NCCC Director to take measures to increase the percentage of program participants who are disadvantaged youth toward 50% by 2012.

(Sec. 1504) Requires, to the extent practicable, that at least 50% of the participants in the NCCC summer program are from economically and ethnically diverse backgrounds, including youth who are in foster care.

(Sec. 1505) Permits the Director to select Corps members with prior supervisory or service experience to be team leaders within NCCC units. Requires assignment of units to campuses, rather than camps, which shall be headed by campus directors, rather than camp superintendents.

Requires campus locations to be cost-effective (as determined by a feasibility study), and distributed in a manner that allows Corps units to be easily deployed for disaster and emergency response.

(Sec. 1506) Requires the Director to ensure, to the extent practicable, that each NCCC participant receives training in cardiopulmonary resuscitation (CPR), first aid, and other skills related to disaster preparedness and response.

(Sec. 1507) Places a specific emphasis on NCCC projects that support infrastructure improvement, energy conservation, and urban and rural development. Specifies additional federal agencies required to develop NCCC project

proposals.

(Sec. 1509) Makes the Chief Executive Officer (CEO) of the Corporation, rather than the NCCC Director, responsible for appointing a permanent cadre of NCCC supervisors and training instructors. Requires the CEO, in appointing members of the permanent cadre, to give consideration to retired and other former law enforcement, fire, rescue, and emergency personnel, and other individuals with backgrounds in disaster preparedness and recovery. Requires such cadre to receive training in working with disadvantaged youth.

(Sec. 1513) Expands the NCCC Advisory Board to include the Administrator of the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA), the Secretary of Transportation, the Chief of the United States Forest Service, the Administrator of the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA), and the Secretary of Energy. Includes among the Board's activities helping to coordinate activities with the Corps, including disaster response activities.

(Sec. 1514) Requires the Corporation to periodically (currently, annually) evaluate NCCC programs and report its findings to Congress.

Subtitle F: Amendments to Subtitle F (Administrative Provisions) -
(Sec. 1603) Prohibits national service programs from existing solely to refer individuals to federal assistance programs or state assistance programs that receive federal funding.

(Sec. 1604) Alters hearing and grievance procedures to: (1) allow the emergency suspension of national service assistance to grantees for up to three 30-day periods; and (2) require all grantees, not just states and localities, to establish grievance procedures.

(Sec. 1605) Requires grantees that serve children to consult with parents when developing or operating their programs, and obtain written permission from parents when transporting minor children.

(Sec. 1606) Adds to the duties of state Commissions in preparing national service plans for their states, to include such duties as developing measurable state goals and coordinating national service funding applications in the state.

Requires states to develop comprehensive state service plans for service by adults who are age 55 or older.

(Sec. 1607) Requires the Corporation to: (1) establish performance levels for national service grantees in consultation with such grantees; and (2) provide technical assistance to failing grantees who have received assistance for less than three years.

Requires national service grantees to reach agreements with the Corporation on corrective action plans if they fail to achieve such levels. Provides for the reduction or termination of assistance to grantees who continue to fall short of performance standards after an agreed upon correction period.

Allows the Corporation to reserve up to 1% of the total NCSA and DVSA program funds appropriated in a fiscal year for program accountability activities.

(Sec. 1608) Directs the Corporation, in partnership with the National Conference on Citizenship, to select a set of civic health indicators to comprise a Civic Health Assessment that enables states and communities to assess their civic health.

Requires such partnership to: (1) periodically evaluate and update the Assessment; (2) issue a detailed report, at least annually, analyzing the civic health indicators which, to the extent practicable, include data on different demographic groups; and (3) arrange for the research and tracking of domestic and international volunteering, and an independent evaluation of its impact.

(Sec. 1611) Entitles the Inspector General of the Corporation to access to the records of national service program grantees that relate to such assistance.

(Sec. 1612) Requires the Corporation to consolidate or modify national service application procedures and reporting requirements.

Authorizes the Corporation to set sustainability goals for national service programs which are in writing and used to provide technical assistance to program sponsors in acquiring and leveraging nonfederal funds.

Limits the Corporation's national service grants or agreements to three years, unless a different term is specifically authorized.

Requires the Corporation, when weighing applications for assistance or approved national service positions, to consider the extent to which the applicant's proposal addresses community needs.

Limits Corporation grants for national service programs to \$18,000 per full-time national service position, with adjustments for inflation.

Frees severely economically distressed communities from any requirement to provide matching funds for national service assistance they receive from the Corporation.

Prohibits the Corporation from using NCSA funds to endorse any elementary or secondary school curriculum, and the

federal government from requiring states to submit their academic content and achievement standards for federal approval in order to receive such funds.

Requires entities that select individuals for national service positions to run criminal background checks on such individuals. Prohibits sex offenders, murderers, and those who make false statements in connection with such background checks from serving.

Requires criminal background checks, beginning two years after this Act's enactment, to be conducted on all individuals working in national service positions with certain vulnerable populations.

Directs the Attorney General to study and report to Congress on the feasibility, status, and effectiveness of criminal background check systems.

Specifies that nonprofit organizations promoting competitive and noncompetitive sporting events for the disabled, such as the Special Olympics, are eligible for direct and indirect national service assistance.

Subtitle G: Amendments to Subtitle G (Corporation for National and Community Service) - (Sec. 1701) Allows voting members of the Corporation's Board of Directors whose term expires to continue serving until their successor takes office, but no longer than one year after their term expires.

(Sec. 1702) States that it is the Board's responsibility to set overall policy for the Corporation. Requires the Board to review the CEO's budget proposal in advance of its submission to the Office of Management and Budget (OMB) and review the CEO's performance annually.

(Sec. 1703) Increases the compensation of the Corporation's CEO by 3%.

(Sec. 1704) Requires the Corporation's CEO to: (1) submit a plan to the Board for reaching the goal of 50% full-time approved national service positions by 2012; (2) bolster public awareness of, and recruitment efforts for, the wide range of service opportunities for all citizens; (3) identify and implement recruitment methods that increase the diversity of national service participants and program sponsors; (4) identify and implement recruitment strategies and training programs for bilingual volunteers in the DVSA's National Senior Service Corps; and (5) obtain the opinions of peer reviewers in evaluating applications to the Corporation for assistance.

Allows the CEO to solicit funds to support outreach and recruitment efforts.

(Sec. 1705) Gives the CEO authority to appoint and determine the compensation of the Corporation's Chief Financial Officer.

(Sec. 1706) Allows the Corporation to enter into personal services contracts for national service research, evaluation, and public awareness activities.

(Sec. 1707) Allows the Corporation to solicit and accept the donation of services from individuals or organizations.

(Sec. 1708) Allows the CEO to assign programmatic functions to state Commissions in order to increase the efficiency or oversight of a national service program.

(Sec. 1709) Directs the Corporation to study and report to Congress on the involvement of veterans in national service programs.

(Sec.

1710) Requires the Corporation to study national service programs for displaced workers to identify how existing programs could better serve such workers and communities that have been adversely affected by plant closings and job losses, and then implement a pilot program based on the study's findings.

(Sec. 1711) Directs the Corporation to study the feasibility and effectiveness of implementing a data matching system to verify an individual's claim to be a citizen, national, or lawful permanent resident alien, and thus eligible for a national service educational award, by using information in the possession of other federal agencies. Authorizes the Corporation to implement a pilot data matching program based on the study's findings.

(Sec. 1712)

Requires the Comptroller General to: (1) develop performance measures for each program receiving federal assistance under the NCSA and DVSA programs; and (2) report to Congress and the Corporation's Board of Directors, within two years of developing such measures and then every five years, on each program's performance against such measures.

(Sec.

1713) Directs the Corporation to study and report to Congress on the development of a Volunteer Management Corps program giving managers the opportunity to contribute their talents to their communities and country.

Subtitle H: Amendments to Subtitle H (Investment for Quality and Innovation) -
(Sec. 1802) Redesignates National Youth Service Day as Global Youth Service Day and designates April 24, 2009, and April 23, 2010, as Global Youth Service Days.

Requires the Corporation to conduct a nationwide Call To Service campaign to encourage everyone to perform public service in the nonprofit sector or government, or by volunteering.

Authorizes the Corporation to undertake appropriate ceremonies and activities to observe September 11 as a National Day of Service and Remembrance.

(Sec. 1803) Repeals the Military Installation Conversion Demonstration programs and the Special Demonstration Project in Alaska.

(Sec. 1805) Establishes a ServeAmerica Fellowships program which directs the Corporation to provide formula grants to states that enable them to award fellowships to individuals they have chosen to participate in service projects, run by nonprofit organizations, which address certain areas of national need.

Includes as ServeAmerica areas of national need: (1) the education of economically disadvantaged students; (2) access to health care; (3) energy efficiency and natural resource conservation; (4) economic opportunities for economically disadvantaged individuals; and (5) disaster preparedness and response.

Requires the number of ServeAmerica positions to increase from 500 for FY2010 to 1,500 for FY2014. Makes ServeAmerica Fellows eligible for national service educational awards.

Authorizes the Corporation to award fixed-amount grants to community-based nonprofit entities to carry out a Silver Scholarship Grant Program which provides \$1,000 scholarships to individuals age 55 or older who complete at least 350 hours of service in a year in an area of national need.

Establishes an Encore Fellowships program providing one-year fellowships to individuals age 55 or older who are placed with nonprofit organizations to serve in areas of national need and receive training to transition to public service employment in the nonprofit sector or government. Provides matching grants to the nonprofit organizations with which Encore Fellows are placed.

Requires the Corporation to conduct an independent evaluation of the Silver Scholarship and Encore

Fellowships programs and widely disseminate the results to the service community.

(Sec. 1806) Establishes a National Service Reserve Corps of individuals who have completed a term of national service or are veterans and are interested in being deployed, for 30-day periods, in response to national disasters and emergencies. Requires the Corporation to develop or contract for the development of a database of all National Service Reserve Corps members and all nonprofit organizations designated to participate in the program.

(Sec. 1807) Directs the Corporation to establish a Social Innovation Funds grant program awarding competitive, renewable, five-year, matching grants to existing grantmaking institutions or partnerships between such institutions and state or local governments which will use the grants to provide competitive, three-to-five year, matching subgrants to community organizations for use in supporting new initiatives or replicating or expanding proven initiatives in low-income communities.

Requires

Fund grantees to be focused on improving measurable outcomes relating to: (1) the education of disadvantaged students; (2) child and youth development; (3) economic opportunity for the disadvantaged; (4) health; (5) resource conservation and environmental quality; (6) energy efficiency; (7) civic engagement; or (8) crime reduction.

Authorizes

the Corporation to reserve program funds for: (1) direct grants to community organizations serving low-income communities or addressing one of the issue areas listed above in geographical areas that have the highest need in such area; and (2) researching and evaluating the use of program funds.

(Sec. 1808) Replaces the current Clearinghouse program with one that requires the Corporation to provide assistance to entities for the establishment of one or more clearinghouses providing information, research, and training services designed to enhance service-learning and national service programs.

Creates

a Volunteer Generation Fund program authorizing the Corporation to award matching grants to states and nonprofit organizations to develop and carry out volunteer programs or make subgrants to support and create new local community-based entities that recruit, manage, or support volunteers.

Requires one-half of such grant funds to be awarded on a competitive basis and the remainder to be allotted to states pursuant to a formula. Reduces the Corporation's maximum share of the cost of programs receiving assistance from 80% for the first year of such assistance to 50% for the fourth year and each year thereafter.

(Sec. 1809) Establishes a Nonprofit Capacity Building program requiring the Corporation to award matching grants to intermediary nonprofit organizations for the delivery of organizational development assistance, including training on best practices, financial planning, grant writing, and compliance with the applicable tax laws, to small and midsize nonprofit organizations, especially those facing resource hardship challenges.

Directs the Corporation, to the extent practicable, to award such a grant to an intermediary nonprofit organization in each state. Requires each grant to be at least \$200,000.

Requires grantees to raise their share of the costs of providing such assistance through contributions from third parties, except where the grantee is a private foundation or specified charity.

Reserves for such program, from the amounts authorized for financial assistance under subtitle H of the Act, \$5 million for each of FY2010-FY2014.

Subtitle I: Training and Technical Assistance -
(Sec. 1821) Creates a new subtitle of the NCSA, consolidating training and technical assistance provisions of the NCSA and DVSA that require the Corporation to provide such assistance to NCSA and DVSA programs. Gives priority to programs where services are needed most, that focus

on service opportunities for underserved rural and urban areas, or that seek a service component combining students, out-of-school youth, and older adults as participants providing community services.

Subtitle J: Repeal of Title III (Points of Light Foundation) - (Sec. 1831) Eliminates federal funding for the Points of Light Foundation.

Subtitle K: Amendments to Title V (Authorization of Appropriations) - (Sec. 1841) Authorizes appropriations for FY2010-FY2014.

Reserves

up to 2.5% of certain appropriations under the NCSA and the DVSA for:
(1) School-Based service-learning improvement initiatives with the Secretary of Education; (2) Civic Health Assessment activities; and (3) training and technical assistance.

Title II: Amendments to the Domestic Volunteer Service Act of 1973 - Revises under DVSA: (1) the VISTA program; and (2) the National Senior Volunteer Corps (Senior Corps), including the Retired and Senior Volunteer program (RSVP), the Foster Grandparent program, and the Senior Companion program.

Subtitle A: National Volunteer Antipoverty Programs - Chapter 1: Volunteers in Service to America - (Sec. 2102) Amends the VISTA program under part A of title I of the DVSA to include the Northern Mariana Islands as a recipient of program services.

Adds to the work to which VISTA volunteers may be assigned: (1) drug abuse rehabilitation and treatment; (2) addressing mental illness; (3) assisting with the reintegration of formerly incarcerated youth and adults into society; (4) financial literacy and planning programs in low-income communities; (5) before- and after-school programs serving children in low-income communities; (6) community economic development initiatives; (7) assistance to veterans and their families in obtaining access to support services; and (8) health and wellness services to low-income and underserved communities.

Authorizes public or nonprofit organizations to pay all or a portion of the costs of supporting the service of VISTA volunteers.

(Sec. 2103) Establishes a minimum monthly stipend for VISTA volunteers of \$125 and a maximum monthly stipend of \$150, subject to the availability of funds. Allows the Director to provide a stipend of \$250 per month for volunteer leaders.

(Sec. 2104) Eliminates the VISTA Literacy Corps program.

Chapter 2: University Year for VISTA - (Sec. 2121) Eliminates the University Year for VISTA program.

Chapter 3: Special Volunteer Programs - (Sec. 2132) Eliminates the Literacy Challenge Grants program.

Subtitle B: National Senior Service Corps -
(Sec. 2141) Amends title II of the DVSA to rename the National Senior Volunteer Corps program the National Senior Service Corps (NSSC) program.

(Sec. 2143) Amends the Retired and Senior Volunteer program (RSVP) to eliminate the priority given to RSVP participation by volunteers who are 60 or older.

Requires RSVP programs to be designed and implemented with the advice of experts in the field of service being offered, as well as with those who have expertise in the management of volunteers and the needs of older individuals.

Requires RSVP grants, beginning in FY2013, to be awarded for three-year terms through a competitive process, with an option for a three-year grant renewal if the grantee meets certain performance criteria.

Subjects

each RSVP grant expiring in FY2011-FY2013 to an evaluation process requiring its recipient to meet such performance criteria before the grant may be renewed.

Requires that training, technical assistance, and an online resource guide be made available to help grantees meet performance criteria.

(Sec. 2144) Amends the Foster Grandparent program to lower the minimum age for program volunteers from 60 to 55.

Authorizes

providers to determine whether it is in the best interest of a disabled child and foster grandparent to continue their relationship after the child reaches age 21. Requires foster grandparent replacements to be determined through the mutual agreement of all parties providing services to the child.

Increases the minimum stipend provided to low-income foster grandparents to \$3 an hour. Redefines low-income foster grandparents as those whose income does not exceed 200% of the poverty level.

Loosens restrictions on Foster Grandparent program participation by volunteers who are not low-income persons.

(Sec. 2145) Amends the Senior Companion program to lower the minimum age for program volunteers from 60 to 55.

(Sec. 2146) Requires the provision of at least 25% of the funds for RSVP, Foster Grandparent, and Senior Companion programs of national significance, to the maximum extent practicable, to new program sponsors or to sponsors from areas where no RSVP, Foster Grandparent,

or Senior Companion programs are in effect.

Alters the list of RSVP, Foster Grandparent, and Senior Companion programs of national significance. Adds to such list programs that support: (1) drug abuse rehabilitation and treatment; (2) mentoring for low-income youth; (3) energy conservation and environmental protection; and (4) crime prevention activities directed toward low-income or formerly incarcerated youth.

Allows NSSC programs to accept donations.

Subtitle C: Administration and Coordination -
(Sec. 2151) Prohibits volunteer activities under the DVSA from displacing volunteers who are not participants under the national service laws.

(Sec. 2154) Includes the Northern Mariana Islands in DVSA programs.

Subtitle D: Authorization of Appropriations -
(Sec. 2161) Authorizes: (1) \$100 million for the VISTA program for FY2010; (2) \$70 million for the RSVP for FY2010; (3) \$115 million for the Foster Grandparent Program for FY2010; and (4) \$55 million for the Senior Companion program for FY2010. Authorizes such sums as may be necessary for these programs and activities for FY2011-FY2014.

Authorizes
such sums as may be necessary for the Special Volunteer (under part C of title I of the DVSA) and NSSC demonstration programs for FY2010-FY2014.

Reauthorizes appropriations for the administration and evaluation of DVSA programs through FY2014.

Title III: Technical Amendments to Tables of Contents - (Sec. 3101) Makes technical amendments to the tables of contents of the NCSA and the DVSA.

Title IV: Amendments to Other Laws - (Sec. 4101) Makes a technical amendment to the Inspector General Act of 1978.

Title V: Volunteers for Prosperity Program -
(Sec. 5103) Requires the Office of Volunteers for Prosperity (VfP) of the United States Agency for International Development (USAID) to implement a VfPServe program providing skilled professionals with fixed-amount stipends to offset their costs of volunteering abroad to address specified VfP objectives aimed at ameliorating living conditions in developing countries.

Lists those objectives as:

(1) eliminating extreme poverty; (2) reducing world hunger and malnutrition; (3) increasing access to safe potable water; (4) enacting universal education; (5) reducing child mortality and childhood diseases; (6) combating the spread of preventable diseases; (7) providing educational and work skill support for girls and empowering women to achieve independence; (8) creating sustainable business and entrepreneurial opportunities; and (9) increasing access to information technology.

Requires the sponsors of VfP volunteers to provide a dollar-for-dollar match for their VfP grant.

Authorizes appropriations for the VfP program for FY2010-FY2014.

Title VI: Effective Date - (Sec. 6101) Makes this Act effective on October 1, 2009.

(Sec.
6102) Expresses the sense of the Senate that Congress should preserve the income tax deduction for charitable contributions and look for additional ways to encourage charitable giving.

[Click here to view the full text of the legislation.](#)